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Bolyu language

The **Bolyu language** (autonym: *pɔ˧ljuˊ*; Chinese: 巴琉语, 布流语; also known as **Paliu**, **Palyu**, or **Lai** 俅语, 徕语) is an Austroasiatic language of the Pakanic branch (Sidwell 1995). The Bolyu are among the unrecognized ethnic groups of China. In 1984, Bolyu was first studied by Liang Min of the Nationalities Research Institute in Beijing. Liang was the first to suggest the Mon–Khmer affiliation of Bolyu, which was later confirmed by Western linguists such as Paul K. Benedict, Paul Sidwell, and Jerold A. Edmondson.

Bolyu	
Pronunciation	[pɔ˧ljuˊ]
Native to	China
Region	Longlin County, Guangxi
Ethnicity	Bolyu1,800 (2007)[1]
Native speakers	500 (2007)[1]
Language family	Austroasiatic ▪ Mangic ▪ Pakanic ▪ **Bolyu**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`ply`
Glottolog	`boly1239 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/boly1239)`[2]

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Classification

Bolyu is related to the Bugan language, forming the Pakanic branch along with it. However, the place of the Pakanic branch within the Mon–Khmer family is uncertain. Sidwell (1995) suggests that the Pakanic branch may be an Eastern Mon–Khmer branch, thus making it most closely related to the Vietic branch. However, Gérard Diffloth classifies Pakanic as Northern Mon–Khmer, making it most closely related to the Palaungic branch.[3]

Distribution

Bolyu speakers are found in the following locations in southern China (Edmondson 1995).[4][5]

- Douhong 斗烘屯, Xinhe 新合村, Changfa township 长发, Longlin County, Guangxi (often living with Gelao neighbors). Also spoken in the nearby townships of Kechang 克长, De'e 德峨, and Changme 长么.[6]
  - Xinhe 新合村 - Datiezhai 打铁寨, Changfajie 长发街: 50 speakers
  - Xinhua 新华村 - Luowan 罗湾: 300; Kabao 卡保, Renshang 仁上: 160 speakers
  - Villages with only Bolyu people: Muzi 亩子, Dazhai 大寨, Xiaozhai 小寨
- Guosha/Hengsha 过沙/亨沙, Wenya 文雅村, Puhe Miao Autonomous Township 普合苗族自治乡, Xilin County, Guangxi. Also spoken in Naya 那牙, Badahe Township 八大河乡.[6] 230 speakers total.

Li (1999) documents the Bolyu variety of Muzitun 亩子屯, Xinhe Village 新合村, Changfa Township 长发乡, Longlin County, Guangxi.

In the following villages, only elderly speakers of Bolyu remain.

- Zhelang township 者浪乡: Zhezhai 者寨, Langrong 郎荣, Linghao 岭好
- Kechang township 克场乡: Haichang 海长

- Shechang township 蛇场乡: Daguo 达果

1,400 Bolyu reside in Guangxi, and over 1,000 in Yunnan.[6]

Phonology

Bolyu is a monosyllabic tonal language like the surrounding Tai–Kadai, Hmong-Mien and even Vietic languages. Unlike Bugan, Bolyu does not have a tense–lax voice quality distinction.

Initial consonants

		Labial			Alveolar		Alveolo-palatal	Velar			Uvular	Glottal	
		plain	pal	vel	plain	pal		plain	pal	lab		plain	pal
Nasal		[m]	[mʲ]		[n]			[ŋ]					
Stop	voiceless	[p]	[pʲ]		[t]	[tʲ]		[k]	[kʲ]	[kʷ]	[q]	[ʔ]	
	prenasalized	[ᵐb]	[ᵐbʲ]		[ⁿd]								
	aspirated	[pʰ]	[pʰʲ]		[tʰ]	[tʰʲ]		[kʰ]			[qʰ]		
Fricative	voiceless				[s] [ɬ]	[ɬʲ]	[ɕ]					[h]	[hʲ]
	voiced	[v]	[vʲ]	[vˠ]				[ɣ]	[ɣʲ]				
Affricate	voiceless				[t͡s]		[tɕ]						
	aspirated				[t͡sʰ]		[tɕʰ]						
Approximant		[w]			[l]	[lʲ]	[j]						

Tones

Bolyu has a total of six tones (Edmondson 1995).

Bolyu Tones

Tone number	Tone contour
1	˥
2	˧
3	˩
4	˥˧
5	˧˩
6	˩˧

There are 7 vowels in Bolyu (Edmondson 1995): /a, e, ə, i, o, ɔ, u/.

Bolyu allows for a large variety of consonant clusters, and has 8 possible consonantal finals (Sidwell 1995): -p, -t, -k, -m, -n, -ŋ, -w, -j.

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External links

- Bolyu vocabulary from SEAlang (http://sealang.net/monkhmer/database/retrieve.pl?language=Bolyu&sort=gloss&format=html)

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